United Nations

Daily Highlights

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THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ The United Nations ready to be of assistance to the protagonists in South Africa, but "can not do anything without their agreement", says Secretary-General at press briefing in London today.

+ UNPROFOR continues efforts to secure Sarajevo airport for full scale humanitarian operations; Council President appeals for observance of cease-fire.

+ Secretary-General to send small team to Azerbaijan and Armenia to investigate allegations of use of chemical weapons in area.

+ Lord Carrington, Chairman of the European Conference on Yugoslavia, to visit Headquarters in the next few days to continue discussions with Secretary-General and to talk to Council members on an informal basis, following meeting today with Secretary-General in London; Mr. Boutros-Ghali also holds talks today with members of Government of United Kingdom;; to meet with Prime Minister Major tonight.

+ Civil administration component of United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia has entered its active phase, according to Secretary-General's Special Representative Yasushi Akashi.

+ Security Council refers application by Republic of Georgia for United Nations membership to Committee on Admission of New Members.

+ Major-General Timothy Komla Dibuama of Ghana appointed Chief Military Observer of United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission with effect from 12 July.

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The United Nations was discussing what could be done to help resume talks in South Africa at the local level, but could do nothing without the agreement

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of the Government of that country and without the agreement of the members of the Security Council, said Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali at a press briefing in London today.

The Secretary-General also said that he would be discussing with British leaders the possibility of sending a mission to South Africa to gather information on the spot. The United Nations was at the disposal of the protagonists if they wanted its assistance or mediation, and the United Nations was ready if they wanted its presence, but "we can do nothing without their agreement", he added.

Mr. Boutros-Ghali further indicated that he would present the information gathered from his talks in Nigeria, Dakar and London to the Security Council.

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The vanguard of the Canadian battalion from the United Nations Protection Force in Yugoslavia (UNPROFOR), dispatched from Croatia to secure Sarajevo airport for humanitarian services, has now arrived at the airport. But according to a United Nations spokesman today, the airport is still not sufficiently secure and optimal conditions have not yet been achieved for the military observers to fulfill their mission.

In a report to the Security Council this morning, the Secretary-General informed Members that there was still debris on the runway, and mines remaining in several parts of the airport could be accidentally detonated. In addition, persistent fighting around the airport and the nearby suburb of Dobrinja continued to endanger the safety of personnel and aircraft. Four United Nations military observers had been wounded by sniper fire and the process of concentrating heavy weapons in areas under United Nations control had not yet been completed to UNPROFOR's satisfaction.

Following consultations today, Council President José Luis Jesus (Cape Verde) expressed concern over the continuation of military activities around Sarajevo. He strongly appealed to all parties involved to fully cooperate with UNPROFOR and the United Nations in order to reach a complete cease-fire in and around Sarajevo.

Meanwhile, the spokesman said UNPROFOR was continuing its efforts to secure the airport and establish more complete air traffic control. The Commander of Sector Sarajevo, Brigadier-General Lewis MacKenzie has informed the Secretary-General that the airport can now receive up to eight flights a day during daylight hours. So far, several French aircraft had been able to fly in under visual flight rules, bringing some military personnel and humanitarian aid which had been distributed by the United Nations High Commisioner for Refugees, he said.

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The Secretary-General has decided to send a small team to Azerbaijan and Armenia to investigate allegations of use of chemical weapons in the region, a

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United Nations spokesman said today. The team, which will leave Geneva for the area on 4 July, will be composed of three recognized experts and two members of the Secretariat. The visit is expected to last five days.

The decision to dispatch such a team follows allegations by the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan that Armenian forces had resorted to the use of chemical weapons. A letter from the Azerbaijani Representative to the Security Council President reported that the effects of iprit (a mustard agent), cyanide and phosgen had been detected during blood tests of wounded Azeris in recent events in Nakhichevan.

The Permanent Representative of Armenia subsequently denied the allegations in a similar letter to the Secretary-General in which he stated unequivocally that the information was untrue. He requested that a group of competent specialists be dispatched to the conflict zone.

Acting on his own authority and in response to the standing request of the General Assembly contained in operative paragraph 5 of resolution 43/74A of 1988, the Secretary-General has authorized a small team to visit the area to carry out an investigation of these reports.

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Lord Carrington, Chairman of the European Community Conference for Yugoslavia, will be coming to New York in the next few days to continue the talks that he had begun today with the Secretary-General in London and to talk to the Council members on an informal basis about the situation in former Yugoslavia, said Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali at a press briefing in London today.

The Secretary-General, who arrived in London last night from Dakar where he attended the Summit Meeting of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), also met today with members of the Government of the United Kingdom. They included the Secretary of State for the Environment, Michael Howard, the Minister of State for Overseas Development, Baroness Linda Chalker, and the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Douglas Hurd. This evening he was to have a working dinner with Prime Minister John Major.

The Secretary-General's discussions today ranged from the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro last month - with Mr. Howard, to development assistance for African countries - with Baroness Chalker. With Mr. Hurd he discussed, among other subjects, his new report, Agenda for Peace, and recent developments in South Africa.

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The Secretary-General's Special Representative for Cambodia, Yasushi Akashi, announced today that the civil administration component of United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) has entered its active phase. The UNTAC has opened provincial offices throughout Cambodia and has appointed Directors in 20 provinces.

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Under the Paris Agreement signed last year by all four Cambodian factions, direct control will be exercised by UNTAC over five areas: foreign affairs, national defence, finance, public security and information. Among other areas to be supervised by the United Nations operation are: public health, education, agriculture, sea and river fishing, transport, communication and postal administration, distribution and production of energy, waterways, transport, tourism and public monuments, mines and general administration.

The UNTAC will begin to review the laws and regulations of the various administrations in order to verify whether they are compatible with the letter and objectives and purposes of the Paris Agreements.

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The Security Council this morning referred the Republic of Georgia's application for membership in the United Nations to the Committee on the Admission of New Members for examination and report. The Committee will meet later today to make its recommendation, and the Security Council will convene on Monday (6 July) to take up this matter.

Eduard Shevardnadze, President of the State Council of Georgia, declared in a letter dated 6 May, that his country accepted the obligations contained in the Charter and solemnly undertook to carry them out. T. Dzhaparidze, First Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Georgia, said in a similar letter that his country did not regard any of the States surrounding it as enemies or adversaries and sought, on the contrary, to establish close links with them based on cooperation and collaboration in political and economical matters. Integration into the pan-European process, the letter stated, was one of the most important components of Georgia's Foreign policy.

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Major-General Timothy Komla Dibuama of Ghana, whom the Secretary-General has appointed Chief Military Observer of the United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission (UNIKOM), will assume his new post on 12 July. He succeeds Major-General Gunther Greindl of Austria.

General Dibuama, who began his military career in 1963, had -- since 1981 -- served as Military Adviser to the Secretary-General. In that capacity, he was involved in the preparation of military operations plans for the establishment of United Nations peace-keeping operations in Namibia, Afghanistan and Pakistan, India and Pakistan, Iraq and Kuwait, Western Sahara and Cambodia. As Military Adviser, he also provided advice on military matters referred by the Force Commanders of peace-keeping missions to Headquarters for direction.

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